



HOUSING  
DEVELOPMENT  
*consortium*

June 6, 2012

**Growth Management Planning Council**

Department of Development and Environmental Services  
900 Oakesdale Avenue SW  
Renton, WA 98057-5212

**RE: Countywide Planning Policies Housing Chapter**

Dear Council,

On behalf of HDC's more than 100 organizational members, thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed update to the Housing Chapter of the Countywide Planning Policies (CPP). HDC is the professional association for the local nonprofit, affordable housing development sector. We represent private businesses, nonprofit organizations, and government agencies who are working to develop affordable housing in King County and who are dedicated to the vision that all people should have a safe, healthy, and affordable home in communities of opportunity—in other words, safe neighborhoods with good jobs, quality schools, strong access to transit, and plenty of parks and open space

**We would like to thank the Interjurisdictional Team (IJT) staff for their tireless work to find common ground and develop the proposed Housing Chapter policies, which we support.** HDC supported the work plan to revise the Housing Chapter because we believed there was a better way to guide housing policy across the County. Regardless of population growth rates, all King County jurisdictions have a shared responsibility to meet the housing needs of limited-income people and to accommodate a fair and balanced portion of the total quality, affordable housing stock necessary to meet the needs of County residents. We believe the proposed Housing Chapter promotes this goal by directing cities to adopt policies that address the countywide need for affordable housing. That is why we support this proposal. **Specifically, HDC strongly supports Policies H-9 and H-10 which promote development of affordable housing in communities of opportunity.**

**HDC's Affordable Housing Members:**  
Low-income Housing Organizations  
Community Development Corporations  
Special Needs Housing Organizations  
Public Housing Authorities  
Community Action Agencies  
Workforce Housing Organizations  
Public Development Authorities  
Government Agencies and Commissions  
Architects and Designers  
Development Specialists  
Certified Public Accountants  
Regional Funders and Lenders  
National Funders and Lenders  
Community Investment Specialists  
Property Managers  
Law Firms  
Contractors

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In addition, HDC supports two work plan items to move the Housing Chapter policies forward:

1. **We ask that the IJT begin a working group to recommend new policies and funding sources that can address the substantial housing needs of those earning less than 30% of the area median income (AMI).**
2. **We support the work plan recommendation to expand the Growth Management Planning Council's (GMPC) monitoring of the effectiveness of the CPP housing policies.** We recommend the GMPC receive annual updates on cities' progress, or lack thereof, in addressing the countywide housing needs.

### **Meeting the Housing Needs of Very-Low Income People**

HDC is pleased with the discussions that have occurred over the past year, bringing regions of the County together to develop a common understanding of the struggles cities are facing in providing housing for their most vulnerable residents. It is this shared understanding and a commitment to addressing countywide housing needs that we believe helped shape Policy H-2 which promotes interjurisdictional efforts to address the housing needs of those earning less than 30% AMI and which recognizes that meeting this need will require additional public funding.

**HDC applauds this commitment to addressing the needs of the County's lowest income residents for the first time in the CPP, and we look forward to participating in the working group to provide creative solutions to address the needs of this population.**

### **Monitoring & Accountability**

That said, change is never easy. Much uncertainty remains about how effective the new policies will be without strict unit targets to hold cities accountable for their actions. Many people, HDC Members included, continue to express concerns about the absence of city-based targets in this proposal. To the cities, we implore: *Prove them wrong.*

This is not an end to the process but a new beginning to housing policy in King County. HDC will continue to work with cities as they update their comprehensive plans in order to craft strong policies that help meet the housing needs of limited-income people, just as we have worked alongside the IJT staff to update the Housing Chapter. We believe the proposed policies will renew the cities' commitments to implementing strategies that not only address the housing needs of their residents but also address the common housing needs of residents across the County. We hope the cities will live up to this expectation. **Monitoring by the GMPC will provide the check and balance necessary to ensure the new policies are working as intended.**

We look forward to returning in future years to report on the great work being done by cities to adopt policies that address the countywide need for affordable housing, and, in the case that cities are not able to address the countywide need as intended by this proposal, we look forward to working with the GMPC and the IJT staff to revise the policies when necessary.

Best Regards,



Kelly Rider  
Policy Director